

Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

Minutes (27 July 2023, 13:00 – 16:00, Heathrow Academy)

Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
David Hilton	Ascot Parish Council
Steve Braund *	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Dr Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
Spencer Norton	British Airways
Darren Rhodes	CAA
Ben Lippitt *	CAA
Laura Keith	CISHA
Ian Greene	DfT
Gary Marshall *	DfT
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Rob Buick	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Conway	Englefield Green Action Group
Nigel Davies *	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Beckford	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Mike Glen *	Heathrow
Rick Norman *	Heathrow
Andy Knight	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Dave Knights	Heathrow
Lisa Forshev *	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Colin Stanbury *	Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Surinderpal Suri *	London Borough of Ealing
Paul Baker *	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
Amanda Nicholls *	London Borough of Lewisham
Deborah Petty *	Molesey Residents Association
Robin Clarke *	NATS
Pete Glass *	NATS
James Trow	Noise Consultants
Graham Young	Richings Park Residents Association
Peter Willan *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr Sean Beatty *	Spelthorne Borough Council
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Carole Marr *	Windlesham Society

* *Attended online*

Apologies

John Burton
Becky Coffin
Ian Jopson

CAA
Heathrow
NATS

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) welcomed members to the forum.
- 1.2 AL went through comments received on the minutes of the previous meeting. He noted that a request had been made for Christine Taylor (CT) to be added to the list of attendees. He advised that Tim Walker (TW) had challenged comments from DfT (paragraph 1.5) about there being no concentrated routes on which to base research, citing concentrated arrival routes over SE London introduced by London City Airport in 2016. Stephen Clark (SC) proposed some rewording of paragraph 1.5 regarding the health impacts of Performance Based Navigation (PBN). AL noted that the minutes would be updated and marked as final.
- 1.3 AL went through the actions from the previous meeting as detailed below.
- 1.4 **Follow up Carole Marr's questions about curved approaches (1.8).** AL confirmed that the Airspace team had responded in writing on 14 July.
- 1.5 **Amend previous minutes (1.11).** These have now been amended and marked as final.
- 1.6 **Appoint advisor to review noise complaints system (1.14).** AL advised that this was being progressed in conjunction with the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA).
- 1.7 Armelle Thomas (AT) pointed out that there had been insufficient time for communities to respond to a survey conducted by Egis on behalf of the CAA on the management of noise complaints by Heathrow. AL noted that CISHA had asked him to inform members of the survey and had made that point to them.
- 1.8 **Invite Defra or DHSC to sit on forum (1.15).** AL confirmed that an invitation had been sent out jointly with John Burton from the CAA. He noted that the deep dive topic for the next forum would be health and he hoped to get them involved in that session.
- 1.9 **Frankfurt noise monitor discussion (1.17).** Rob Buick (RB) confirmed that a meeting date had now been arranged.
- 1.10 **Provide detail on the process to move flights forward (3.15).** AL confirmed that a paper had been circulated to members on 25 July.
- 1.11 **Appoint an independent technical advisor to draft the scope of an assessment of the cost and benefit of night flights (3.19).** AL advised that a shortlist of potential candidates was currently being considered.
- 1.12 **Write to DfT in relation to the recently closed Night Noise Objective consultation (3.20)** - AL confirmed that this was being drafted in conjunction with Rick Norman (RN).

2 Data Dashboard

- 2.1 Michael Glen (MG) presented the latest data dashboard for operations and night flights. He noted that some statistics were impacted by the long spell of easterly operations in May and June, such as track keeping which was affected by the easterly CPT route which has historically lower adherence than other routes. He noted there were more early morning arrivals than last year as more international markets have opened up following the pandemic, but numbers were still lower than in 2019. He explained that there had been a spike in the number of late runners in June due to adverse weather conditions similar to last year, compounded by air traffic control restrictions in Karlsruhe. He noted that airlines were working to reduce the number of off-schedule flights. He added that Heathrow was now night stopping many flights and had set a target of 110 nights without night flights between 23:30 and 04:30 in 2023. He explained that it was a cautious target which Heathrow hoped to exceed, noting that so far there had been 84 nights without night flights up to the end of June.
- 2.2 Margaret Majumdar (MM) was glad to hear that work was ongoing to reduce the number of night flights. She proposed that the number of nights without night flights should instead be referred to as the number of nights without late runners, as there are always early morning arrivals during the night period. **ACTION MG**
- 2.3 Dave Gilbert (DG) asked if the historic rights for early morning arrival slots could be changed, and Peter Willan (PW) suggested that there were no barriers to removing flights before 06:00. MG explained that the slots were managed by Airport Coordination Limited (ACL) and were bound by legalities. Andy Knight (AK) recommended that members read the paper that was circulated on 25 July as it provided some context on this as well as links to the relevant legislation.

3 Deep Dive: Respite

- 3.1 AL introduced the deep dive session on the topic of respite, advising that presentations would be given by Paul Beckford (PB), Nicole Porter (NP), Darren Rhodes (DR) and James Trow (JT).
- 3.2 PB gave a presentation covering community views on the effectiveness of Heathrow's initiatives and research on respite, thanking community group members for their input. He raised a number of key challenges, such as how to share noise on a fair and equitable basis, the role of respite and how it is measured, how much respite is possible, route usage restrictions and the need for a clear timetable for action. The presentation was circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 3.3 SC felt that the definition of respite was key, noting that Teddington was not affected most of the time but was then suddenly overflowed when the airport switched to easterly operations.
- 3.4 PW stressed that while 'valued respite' of 9dB was important, the absolute noise level should also be considered, noting that the average noise level L_{Aeq} was a useful metric for arrivals. He advised that the cost of respite should also be considered, as respite for one area would mean more noise for another, and the Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) currently favoured the concentration of routes. He cautioned that it was not possible to achieve pure respite in some areas such as those located between the runways.

- 3.5 NP gave a pre-recorded overview of respite research, providing context for Heathrow's research, a high-level recap of the work to date, and the current understanding of some key aspects of delivering respite. The presentation was circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 3.6 Members raised a number of issues. PB asked how respite should be delivered at night and MM expressed concern about the apparent unimportance of daytime respite, noting that since the survey took place more people were working from home and might find daytime noise harder to cope with. PW felt that more account should have been taken of the cost of respite and DG felt that the economics were unclear as TAG took no account of change. Deborah Petty (DP) questioned the sample size of the study and Surinderpal Suri (SS) called for a clear regulatory framework for respite.
- 3.7 DR gave a presentation on [CAP 2250](#) "Survey of Noise Attitudes 2014: Aircraft Noise and Annoyance, Further Analysis", published 2 December 2022, building on Heathrow's noise respite research. The analysis found that noise respite of 8dB and 9dB L_{Aeq8h} was found to have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of a respondent describing themselves as highly annoyed. The presentation was circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 3.8 DR noted that Heathrow was relatively unique in the world in switching runways at 3pm to provide respite from westerly arrivals. AT dismissed this, stating that most other countries had moved their main airports to reduce noise and that Heathrow should not be located near such a large conurbation.
- 3.9 PB asked if more research was needed. DR acknowledged that research was always welcome and that the upcoming ANAS survey would be much larger than SoNA or any other previous survey at Heathrow.
- 3.10 CT asked why the analysis looked at socio-economic status. DR advised that he was a noise expert but explained that in all areas there was a common association between environmental impacts and socio-economic status, noting the same association for road traffic noise and pollution, so it was important to check that a finding about respite was not just a finding related to socio-economic status.
- 3.11 DH asked whether the strategy was to reduce the impact of noise or to create the least amount of noise. IG advised that respite was best defined by local circumstances to find the right outcome locally, so it was up to Heathrow to find the best solution.
- 3.12 SC suggested that the SoNA study had not set out to look into respite and asked if DR was looking at areas with similar noise levels. DR confirmed and added that they were also controlling for absolute noise levels and areas with and without respite.
- 3.13 PW posed the question that if 40 flights were taken from someone experiencing 70dB and given to someone else, would they experience 70dB instead. DR confirmed this but explained that if 50% of the flights were given to someone else, the first person would only experience a 3dB drop in average noise level, whereas the second person would experience a much greater increase. PW added that there should be a local noise objective for Heathrow, so that the benefit goes to those suffering the most.
- 3.14 SS asked why slow time averaging was used for noise levels, noting that it did not capture all of the sound energy. DR acknowledged his point but explained that it was the standard metric used for aviation noise, and as the analysis correlated a noise figure with a response the results would be consistent. SS asked if the sample size was adequate to guide policy. DR advised that the study gave a statistically significant effect which showed that the sample size was large enough, but noted there was an opportunity to repeat the work with the ANAS study.

- 3.15 Michael Thornton (MT) asked where he could find more information about the threshold for high levels of annoyance when comparing respite and no respite. DR cited CAP 2250 as mentioned in the presentation.
- 3.16 JT gave a presentation on respite concepts for airspace modernisation. He noted that Heathrow's Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) to introduce airspace modernisation was considering three respite concepts which could potentially be applied to any of the airspace design options: extending departure respite through runway alternation; departure respite through route alternation; and respite through alternation of vectored arrivals. He noted that all three concepts had the potential to offer respite benefits to some overflowed areas. The presentation was circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 3.17 AT asked if it would be possible to achieve 8 or 9dB respite using the three concepts. JT confirmed that it would be possible under certain circumstances.
- 3.18 SC commented that the presentation was helpful and asked a lot of good questions, noting that the impacts needed to be understood to provide the right answers.

4 Annoyance and impacts of noise

- 4.1 RB presented a video by Quiet American Skies entitled "Aircraft Noise and Emissions: Health and Environmental Impacts". The video is available to watch on [YouTube](#). AL noted that the video covered health impacts, and this would be the topic of the deep dive at the next forum.
- 4.2 DG gave a presentation advising that the introduction of PBN over densely populated communities caused major problems and called for the introduction of PBN around Heathrow not to be progressed until those aspects are understood.

5 AOB

- 5.1 PB asked if there were plans to publish feedback from the Noise Action Plan (NAP) consultation. Pierre Sohier (PS) advised that Heathrow had received over 650 submissions and was aiming to provide a high-level summary of the responses. PB asked if Heathrow would be engaging on the feedback and how it was considered when updating the NAP. PS was reluctant to commit to something he could not deliver, noting that he had already asked Defra for an extension due to the volume of feedback received.
- 5.2 AT asked if a health expert would attend the next meeting. AL recapped that experts had been approached and he hoped they would be able to contribute.
- 5.3 PW asked when he would be able to see the Stage 2 airspace modernisation submission. David Knights (DK) advised that it would be available on the CAA portal within seven days of submission.

6 Date of next meeting

- 6.1 AL advised that future meetings would be held on Wednesdays at the London Heathrow Marriott where possible, with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 27 September 2023, 13:00-16:00.